

4-4-1994

04/04/1994 - Jorns Present Annual State of the University Address.pdf

University Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1994

Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "04/04/1994 - Jorns Present Annual State of the University Address.pdf" (1994). 1994. 166.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1994/166

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Press Releases at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1994 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

94-93

April 5, 1994

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

JORNS PRESENTS ANNUAL STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS

CHARLESTON -- In his annual State of the University address, Eastern President David Jorns reflected on 100 years of distinction that have ensued since the founding of the institution in 1895.

He also cited a long list of accomplishments that have highlighted his presidency, offered a financial outlook for the university and expounded on a strategic plan that maps the future of the institution.

Jorns said the university today is not that much different than it was 100 years ago.

"It is still true that this university is one of the finest in the state. The Normal School that was originally established on this location was also regarded as one of the finest of its type. The dedication of the faculty and staff and the satisfaction of the students in what they have received has also remained excellent. And, of course, Old Main is still here," he noted.

He described the modern university as a "sort of creative chaos that contributes as broadly and as fulsomely as possible to the learning of our society....We are

-more-

ADD 1/1/1/1

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

organized to support the common needs of our students; our students, the very reason we exist....At Eastern, we are privileged to be in a place of beauty, a cloister, a place of thought, and yet in the very mainstream of life."

He added, "We have chosen to become an institution of increasing quality which means that we will have to focus our attention and contribute heavily to those areas of success that have so marked us in the past and which will continue to mark us in the future....Increasingly the cost of private education has thrown more and more capable young people into the public sector. We are in an excellent position to benefit from this capable student body, while simultaneously fulfilling our commitments to underrepresented groups and the people of our region."

Jorns later turned his attention to the many accomplishments that have made the university proud. Among them are:

- * A 5-year graduation rate of 61 percent -- about 20 percentage points above the national graduation rate of universities of the same type and second highest graduation rate of Illinois public universities.

- * A low student loan default rate of slightly over 5 percent, making it one of the best in the nation.

- * A current and former student body who are very satisfied with their education.

- * Revision of hiring practices and internal governing policies to insure equity and accountability.

- * Revision of textbook rental policy.

-more-

ADD 2/2/2/2

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

- *Creation of alumni chapters and restoral of alumni director position and alumni publication.

- *Establishment of entrepreneurial bank whereby a small percentage of the university's available money can be borrowed at interest by individuals within the university who need money in order to create new undertakings which will in turn generate profits for them and for the university.

- *Development of a series of administrative evaluations, whereby all administrators, including the president, will be evaluated on a regular basis by all their constituencies.

- *Implementation of a distance learning project through the Prairie Consortium and with area community colleges.

- *Establishment of a crisis management team.

- *Organization of a Staff Senate.

- *Creation of a division of enrollment management charged with forming and molding the number and type of students who will come to the university.

- *Participation in reorganization of the Mid-Continent Conference.

- *The refinancing of a number of housing bonds, producing \$8 million to be spent according to planning priorities and to construct additional Greek Court buildings which will provide additional revenue and serve as the first location for African-American Greek organizations on campus in the history of the university.

- *The receipt of \$11 million in state funding for the renovation of

-more-

ADD 3/3/3/3

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Buzzard Building and an additional \$2 million to bring facilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- *Participation in North Central Association Accreditation self-study and NCAA certification process.

- *Completion of benchmarking report that will be used in strategic planning initiative.

- *Participation in Office of Civil Rights Title IX review in athletics to determine appropriate gender balance for university athletic teams.

Jorns also mentioned the university's efforts to provide bar alternatives for students, including more concerts and other indoor and outdoor campus activities, extended hours at the Student Recreation Center, proposed renovations to the Student Union and possibly the addition of a privately funded coffee house on the campus.

On a more serious note, Jorns talked at length about the continuing decline in financial support for the institution and the concomitant rise in expectations.

He said that despite a proposed 3.5 percent budget increase, the university will have limited surplus to meet all its financial obligations, including \$75 million in deferred maintenance on buildings.

"For the coming year, the governor has recommended, for the first time in recent memory, a higher education budget which is the same as that recommended by the Board of Higher Education. This is a very commendable act and all of us should

-more-

be grateful to the governor for his courage in taking this step....However, depending on the increase in fixed costs and salary increments, the university has very little, if any, spare money," Jorns said.

Jorns said it has been increasingly difficult for the university to remain liquid from year to year. Once personnel expenses, fixed cost expenditures and charges for instructional materials and equipment are subtracted from the university's \$55 million appropriated budget, the institution is left with \$400,000, or seven-tenths of one percent of the total appropriated budget, for discretionary expenditures.

Non-appropriated dollars, totalling \$45 million, support the bond revenue and/or local account functions of the university, such as housing and parking.

"The state has continued to have difficulty in raising enough revenue to operate, resulting in privation in all areas of state government," Jorns said.

He said the consequence of the state's difficulties is that higher education, though receiving small budgetary increases in the recent past, has consistently lost ground due to the even greater rise in the cost of materials, repair and renovation, standard maintenance and salaries.

"This institution is nearly two-thirds self-supported through the money paid by students to live in university housing, participate in food service, through fees and tuition, and income generated by grants, conferences and other local income account activities.

"About one-third of the money that the institution receives is actually from the state. I anticipate that this will continue to be true for the foreseeable future," Jorns noted.

He suggested that the increased cost of higher education be met by increasing

tuition and fees and by continuing to reallocate cost within the university, which already has been accomplished to a large extent through a reorganization resulting in the reduction of academic colleges from six to four.

"Merely passing tuition increases without sufficient explanation of the reason for these increases, however, is not just and not fair," Jorns remarked.

In this regard, he said a committee will be established to inform students and faculty and staff why tuition increases will likely be needed in the years to come and how that money will be applied to the basic well-being of the university.

Reallocated monies, he said, should be invested in the library and increased student and faculty services, deferred maintenance, instructional equipment and increased technological support of the university's basic administrative functions.

He pointed out that fixed cost increases, such as utilities and other unavoidable expenses, as well as salary increments, should be absorbed either through state allocations or the use of tuition money.

The funding crisis, Jorns said, has forced the university to tighten its focus and to concentrate on meeting the objectives of the Illinois Board of Higher Education's Priorities, Quality and Productivity (PQP) initiative designed to improve the quality and productivity of higher education by making priority choices.

Jorns admitted, "We have had some difficulties with PQP because many decisions made, in our view, did not take sufficient account of local conditions and a full understanding of the data we submitted. Moreover, our university seems to have performed at least as well as some other universities that were rewarded PQP initiatives, where as we were not."

Referring to a recent campus visit by IBHE Chairman Arthur Quern to discuss

the PQP process, Jorns said he believes the university is making progress in determining what it considers to be quality programming and expressed optimism in the institution's ability to fulfill the expectations of PQP in a manner that will benefit all those concerned.

He focused further discussion on the university's move to decentralize its budget, giving each unit within the university complete control and responsibility for budget decisions. "I do not believe that having all budgetary control centered in the president's office and within the vice presidential offices, as it has been historically, is good management for a complex budget....By the time the decentralized process is completed, each unit within the university should have its own basic budget and will be empowered to use it as it wishes."

In closing, Jorns shared with the audience, mostly composed of faculty, his expectations of their involvement in the university's strategic planning process designed to preserve and foster individual disciplines while giving the institution a clearer sense of direction and purpose.

"You will, generally, be the architects of your own futures," he said. "It is up to us to insure that the institution we have received is an even better institution when we pass it on to those who will take it from us in years to come."